THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (SHRI E. PONNUSWAMY): (a) to (c) The Indian Oil Corporation Limited (IOC) had introduced Voluntary Retirement Scheme with effect from 1.6.1990 as per the guidelines of the Department of Public Enterprises. Consequent on technology upgradation, modernisation, automation and system improvements, redeployment of employees at different locations became essential. As all concerned employees were not in a position to get redeployed owing to mobility constraints, etc., in order to help and facilitate separation of such employees and to achieve optimum utilization of manpower, the IOC decided to liberalise its Voluntary Retirement Scheme for a limited period from 3.5.2000 to 30.6.2000.

As on 1.4.2000, there were 34,059 employees on the rolls of the OIC. No employees are expected to become surplus. Hence the question of financial burden on the Corporation due to surplus employees does not arise.

Bridging of OIL pool Account Gap

†84. SHRI RAJ MOHINDER SINGH:
DR. D. MASTHAN:

Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that oil pool account gap is expected to be more this year in comparison to the last year;

(b) if so, what was the gap in the year 1999-2000;

(c) the expected gap during the current year 2000-2001; and

(d) the steps contemplated by Government to bridge this gap?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (SHRI E. PONNUSWAMY): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) Outstanding claims of oil companies from the oil pool account, stood at about Rs. 6000 crores (provisional) as on 31.3.2000

(c) Oil pool account gap depends upon various factors such as fluctuation in international prices of crude and controlled petroleum poducts, fluctuations in foreign exchange rates, domestic prices of controlled petroleum products etc. Hence it is not possible to accurately estimate the pool position on a future date.

†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.

(d) with a view to contain the deficit in the oil pool account, the Government have taken a number of measures such as moving product prices towards import parity and gradual phasing out of subsidy on petroleum products.

Disinvestment of some OIL PSUs

85. SHRI ANANTRAY DEVSHANKER DAVE:
SHRI PRAFUL PATEL:

Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Government have taken a decision to go ahead with disinvestment of some oil public sector units;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether it is also a fact that his Ministry has opposed the decision of Government in this regard; and

(d) if so, the details thereof and whether his Ministry was not consulted prior to this decision?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (SHRI E. PONNUSWAMY): (a) to (d) Government has decided to disinvest upto 10% of equity in Indian Oil Corporation (OIC) during the current financial year after the restructuring of stand-alone refining companies is completed. The decision has been taken in consultation with Ministry of Petroleum and Natural Gas.

Payment by ONGC to Andhra Government

86. DR. DASARI NARAYANA RAO:
DR. Y. LAKSHMI PRASAD:

Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Oil and Natural Gas Commission is to pay Andhra Pradesh Government for construction of Bridge on Vishist river between Yanum and Yedhurulanka; and

(b) by when the amount is likely to be released?